Opening Session

The morning of the TCEA Google Academy, the presenters opened with a short presentation about how it all came about. This type of academy had apparently never been done before at TCEA and when they listed it, the class sold out within a very short amount of time. With some work, they expanded the original numbers by fifty and again it was sold out immediately. So, much to their chagrin, they expanded the size several more times and maxed out their capacity. What a great feeling! Not only did this make them feel special, but those of us who registered and were able to attend also felt very lucky. I, personally was pumped up to learn everything the presenters had prepared. As a gmail user and a google doc user, I knew that they had many more items to share with me and I couldn't wait. Google certainly didn't let me down. The day was anything but dull. I learned as much that day as I do during a normal TCEA convention and I look forward to sharing it with everyone back at my district. The following are some of the presentations I went to and a link to their presentation or the main highlights of what they shared with the room:

Google Apps In The Classroom: 50 ways in 50 minutes

Presentation: https://docs.google.com/present/edit?id=0AamxQwonmemnZGZzOTM4dzZfMzJndmhkZzU3Yg&hl=en

Presenters Blog: http://friedtechnology.blogspot.com/

cool site of her presentation: http://www.aviary.com

Educating in the Cloud with Google Apps

This session was all about creating a Google Doc Cloud for your district. If you don't know what that means, it is basically making google your e-mail provider and document creator etc for your district in a private setting that protects the employees and students from outsiders.

https://docs.google.com/present/edit?id=0AamxQwonmemnZGZzOTM4dzZfMzFkd2N3dmNkYw&hl=en

The Ins and Outs: Preparing for the Google Certification Test

This is the one that I was most interested in and got a lot of information out of to take home with me. Google Certification is a simple way for you to make yourself an expert on Google. By studdying their premade study guides and taking the exams and then submitting some additional infromation, Google will stamp you as certified. This is by no means an easy certification. Many in the presentation and even outside of the presentation said that it took them a lot of study time and several testing opportunities to actually pass the test. I am personally already studying and can't wait to finish the process successfully. The following is a link to the blog containing all of the information and certification:

http://ht.ly/3RURI

Going Google

Although I didn't attend this session, I did get several great tips through the twitter feed and I wanted to share them.

http://ht.ly/3RBsR

http://www.buzztouch.com/pages/

Mastering the Information Age with Google

This session was very cool to me because it was all about the neat features of google that can go unnoticed outside of Google Docs and Gmail.

-Google Squared - A very cool tool that provides automatic comparisons of subjects within a chart. Go see one of the examples and be amazed. Make sure to add some categories and see the true magic of the product. This is a great tool to teach source reliability. You can even builds your own tables.

-Advanced Search You can search by types of documents, reading level, language and so much more. Just click on Advanced Search under the google search box.

-Wonderwheel - helping process a huge topic into a bubble map

-Image Swirl - like wonderwheel but a bubble map of pictures. Just type in your subject and see what appears.

-m.google.com - talk into it to do a vocal search

-googlesms - can search message query to 466453

-soople.com - easy expert search through google. its a shortcut search

igoogle - customize your own google page

google reader - googles own book storage system similar to kindle or nook

Closing Session

The closing session was done by Jaime Casap, Google Education Evangelist (Twitter: @jcasap). I found a great recap of his session on SandyK's blog, so I am going to share the link with you. I do want to add that he certainly inspired the room. He truly did leave us with a great feeling and if he and his kids are the face for google, I can't wait to jump in and become a google expert.

In all, the day was awesome. I learned so much and just knowing that they had to expand and add speakers at the last minute to pull it all off made it that much better. I can totally see creating a google academy for my district and sharing the knowledge I learned on this day. Thank you to Google for a great learning experience.